Montgomery County Council

N E W S   R E L E A S E

COUNCIL APPROVES $3.45 MILLION TO STRENGTHEN COUNTY RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES

The Montgomery County Council today gave its unanimous approval to a package of proposals designed to bolster the County's ability to deal with emergency operations in the wake of September 11.

"There is no greater need than assuring County residents are safe and secure in this troubled time," said Councilmember Phil Andrews, chair of the Public Safety Committee. "Our response to September 11 – especially from our public safety workers – was excellent, but we can't rest there. We need to significantly enhance our ability to respond to future challenges."

The Council approved supplemental appropriations to the capital budget for planning and design funds to build a new Emergency Operations Center and Traffic Management Center in the new Emergency Communications Center located in Gaithersburg. The appropriation for the planning and design of the Emergency Operations Center was $489,000 and, for the Traffic Management Center, $892,000.

The Council also approved an additional $2,069,250 for enhancing the County's ability to respond to incidents of terrorism or other emergencies.

(more…)

These include improvements to the current Emergency Operations Center and County telecommunications, more equipment and training to deal with bio-hazards, enhanced hazardous materials response for the Up County, funding for 20 more recruits for the County Fire recruit class, increases in public health staffing, more bomb squad staffing, 1500 "personal escape masks" for law enforcement "first responders," and improved security in the Executive Office Building garages.

The Council also agreed to consider $1.07 million in enhancements for security in County facilities at their November 20 work session, following more detailed discussions of specific security plans.

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